

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

Dam, Diversion (No.) No. 348

Definition

A structure built to divert part or all the water from a waterway or a stream into a different watercourse, an irrigation canal or ditch, or a water-spreading system.

Purpose

To divert part or all the water from a waterway in such a manner that it can be controlled and used beneficially, or

To divert periodic damaging flows from one watercourse to another watercourse having characteristics that reduce the damage potential of the flows.

Conditions where Practice Applies

Where a diversion dam is needed as an integral part of an irrigation system or a water-spreading system designed to facilitate the conservation use of soil and water resources.

Where it is desirable to divert water from an unstable watercourse to a stable watercourse.

Where the water supply available is adequate for the purpose for which it is to be diverted.

Where the impact of a proposed dam on water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, forest, and visual resources are evaluated and the techniques and measures necessary to overcome the undesirable effects are made part of the work.

Federal, State, and Local Laws¹

Design and construction activities shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations governing pollution abatement, health, and safety. The owner or

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operator shall be responsible for securing all required permits or approvals and for performing in accordance with such laws and regulations. NRCS employees are not to assume responsibility for procuring these permits, rights, or approvals, or for enforcing laws and regulations. NRCS may provide the landowner or operator with technical information needed to obtain the required rights or approvals to construct, operate, and maintain the practice.

Permits may be required from the following agencies:

- 1. West Virginia Department of Health***
- 2. West Virginia Department of Agriculture***

Planning Considerations

Water Quantity

1. Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, evaporation, transpiration, deep percolation, and ground water recharge. Compare the original water course with the diverted water course.

2. Effects of the use of diverted waters for irrigation.

Water Quality

1. Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment, pathogens, and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.

2. Potential temperature changes in downstream waters resulting from differences in bank shading in different water courses.

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3. Potential changes in the amount of soluble substances infiltrating and available for ground water recharge as well as the potential for salt pick-up.

Design Criteria

Materials. All materials to be used in constructing the diversion dam and appurtenances shall have the strength, durability, and workability required to meet the installation and service conditions of the site.

Outlet works. If part of the flow is to be diverted, the outlet works must provide for positive control of both maximum and minimum diversions consistent with the purpose for which the diversion is made. If all the flow is to be diverted, the outlet works must provide for safe diversion of all expected flows, depending on site conditions.

Bypass works. The bypass works must be capable of passing all flows needed to satisfy downstream priorities and all flows in excess of diversion requirements, including expected flood flows. This may require a combination of orifices, weirs, and gates designed to meet the requirements of the site.

Special-purpose works. If debris, bedload materials, or sediments are present under flow conditions subject to diversion, provision shall be made to bypass or remove materials that may be detrimental to the functioning of the outlet works, to other parts of the works, or to areas to which diversion is made. This may require the use of settling basins, debris traps, trash guards, or sluiceways, depending on site conditions.

Vegetation. Disturbed areas not otherwise covered or protected shall be established to grass as soon as practicable after construction. If soil or climatic conditions preclude the use of vegetation and protection is needed, nonvegetative materials, such as mulches or gravel, may be used. Seedbed preparation, seeding, fertilizing, and mulching shall comply with instructions in local technical guides. The vegetation shall be maintained and undesirable species controlled by chemical or mechanical means.

Plans and Specifications

Plans and specifications for installing diversion dams shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

Specifications may be developed from the NEH-20 Series, the 700 Series, or other applicable materials, as appropriate to the complexity of the job.

Measures and construction methods that enhance fish and wildlife values shall be incorporated as needed and as practical.

Operation and Maintenance

An operation and maintenance plan shall be developed for the dam. The plan shall outline the minimum maintenance necessary to ensure the dam functions for its design life.

As a minimum, the plan shall address the following:

1. Annual inspections and inspections after each major storm occurrence to assess the need for repair.
2. Removal of debris accumulations, and sediment deposits.
3. Liming, fertilizing, and mowing of vegetation to maintain a healthy growth.
4. Repair of damaged structures.

¹***Bold italics is information added to the National standard by West Virginia.***